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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

In Today's Papers

Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Parliamentary Union in Istanbul

All papers: On Wednesday, Turkish leaders addressed the fourth conference of the parliamentary union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Istanbul. President Ahmet Necdet Sezer said Turkey was deeply concerned about the attempts to polarize the world along Islamist and Western ends. Sezer called for an international alliance against terrorism, stressing that the UN should be the center of the efforts. Sezer noted Israel and Palestine must live side by side as two states with clearly defined borders. Turkish Parliament Speaker Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan said the Muslim and Western nations were not enemies of each other, and expressed concern that religious fighting, poverty, terrorism and proliferation of nuclear weapons threatened Turkey's region. Turkey's accession into the European Union will forge a better cooperation between the EU and the Islamic world, Erdogan noted. The PM called for a national unity government in Iraq where security is ensured and the country's resources are shared by all Iraqis. Erdogan stressed that economic sanctions imposed on Palestine were unfair, saying that Palestinians should not be punished for their democratic preferences. He called on the international community as well as Palestinian and Israeli leaders to act with common sense. Erdogan maintained no further positive steps should be expected from Turkey unless the blockade on Turkish Cypriots is lifted.

Iranian Parliament Speaker Gulamali Haddad Adil said any military attack on Iran would be illogical. "We had eight years of war with Iraq, and we know how to deal with psychological war tactics," Adil said, stressing that the Islamic world has confidence in Iran that it will not produce nuclear weapons. Palestinian parliament

member Zuhair Sanduka said Hamas came to power by a democratic and transparent election, calling on the international community to realize that Hamas represents the people of Palestine.

Columnist Turgut Tarhanli thinks that Iran's acquisition of nuclear capability does not necessarily justify a military strike. Writing in the liberal-intellectual daily Radikal, Tarhanli emphasized the importance of compromise and no use of force: "In today's world any dispute should be settled without the use of force. This is an international commitment which binds all, but the concept is pushed into a narrow frame because of various pretexts posed by various states. The US plays a shaping role on this issue, however the US definition of international cooperation on security matters makes international consensus and compromise harder than ever before to achieve."

Turkey's Undeclared Embargo Against the US

Bugun columnist Lale Sariibrahimoglu writes that a new crisis is about to start in the Turkey-US relationship. She notes that Turkey, in an effort to upgrade its national defense industry, has placed a 'secret embargo' on US firms due to the American policy of not exporting military technology. For the last two years Turkey has prevented US companies from bidding on the \$3.5 billion worth of arms contracts by attaching special condition asking for technology transfer. After not winning any bid in this field for the last two years, the US sent a letter to Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul through the US Ambassador in Ankara Ross Wilson. US officials confirmed

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to Bugun newspaper that Ambassador Wilson presented Minister Gonul with a two-page letter just a day before his US trip. In his letter dated March 24, Ambassador Wilson stressed that Turkey-US international military cooperation, which had proceeding smoothly, is entering a risky period with Turkey's special conditions on defense industry bids. Ambassador Wilson highlighted four possible negative effects resulting from the implementation of these special conditions: 1. Technical cooperation for the use of the military goods will decrease; 2. Cooperation, like that in Afghanistan, will become more difficult; 3. American arm companies' positive lobbying for Turkey against the Armenian and Greek lobbies will weaken; 4. Ankara will end up paying higher bills for its defense because of the reduced competition.

President Sezer Addresses War Academies

All papers: Speaking at the Turkish Military Academy, President Sezer issued a harsh warning against both Islamist fundamentalism and separatism. Sezer stressed that the fundamentalist threat has reached a worrying level in Turkey but Turkey's biggest assurance against this threat is its secular order. Sezer pointed out that religion should not go beyond private life and should not become part of community life; and the fight against fundamentalism should not be launched as a fight against the religious beliefs of people. One of the major duties of the government is to protect the military's prestige, he added. Sezer said that those trying to separate the country through street protests or terror will not be able to achieve their goals. On foreign policy, Sezer said 'nobody should expect Turkey to accept unfair demands on issues of national interest, such as the Armenian genocide claims and in Cyprus issue. Referring to the relations with the US, Sezer said "the failure to agree on certain issues is not going to affect the overall sense of alliance."

Turkish Police Detain Human Rights Watch Staffer

Zaman, International wires: Turkish police detained Jonathan Sugden, a British researcher for the New York-

based Human Rights Watch (HRW,) for alleged visa violations and brought him to Istanbul before being deported to London soon, HRW said on Wednesday. Sugden was probing abuses in the mainly Kurdish southeast Turkey that involved police and state-sponsored local militiamen (Korucu). The Turkish authorities said Sugden was in the country on a tourist visa, and did not have authorization to carry out human rights work in Turkey. Holly Cartner, HRW Europe and Central Asia director, said the issue was not about the visa, but about the authorities not wanting HRW to document abuses in the region.

Military Operation in Sirnak against the PKK
Hurriyet, Milliyet, and others: The military operation against the PKK launched two days ago in Sirnak continues in Bestler and Dereler region. During a clash between the security forces and the PKK in the Dereler region yesterday, reportedly 12 PKK militants were killed and two soldiers were martyred. Hurriyet says a total of 17 terrorists were killed in the Sirnak region in the last four days.

Turkey to Open a Hospital in Darfur
Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Zaman and others: Turkey will open a field hospital with 50 beds and two operating rooms in Darfur, Sudan, Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) said on Wednesday. Prime Minister Erdogan had visited some 30,000 refugees living in terrible conditions in Otach

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camp during a visit to Sudan later last month.

US Texas Pacific Group Partners with Turkish Liquor Producer
Aksam reports US Texas Pacific Group (TPG) purchased the majority stake in Turkish liquor producer Mey Icki, marking the first international entry into Turkey's alcoholic drinks sector. In 2006, Mey Icki has exported 4 million liters of liquor to 40 countries including Greece, South Korea, Poland, Iraq, and Lebanon.

TV Highlights
NTV, 8.00 a.m.

Domestic News

- President Sezer told the War Academies in Istanbul attempts to divide Turkey along ethnic and religious lines would not succeed.

- British Ambassador in Ankara, Peter Westmacott told NTV the PKK's efforts to use terrorism for political goals were "unacceptable," stressing the importance of cutting the funds flowing to the terrorist organization.

- Turkey's Human Rights Association (IHD) probing the recent public unrest in Diyarbakir has issued a call against using children in demonstrations. In Ankara, 13 people including a founding member of the Kurdish party DTP have been detained for making PKK propaganda.

- Turkish state atomic power body TAEK said Turkey's first nuclear power plant will be built in the Black Sea province of Sinop. TAEK said a nuclear reactor producing 100 megawatts from uranium will be built in the next three to three and-a-half years.

- Animal rights and women's organizations will rally in Ankara over the weekend to protest some local municipalities killing street dogs and bury them in mass graves.

International News

- Italian opposition leader Prodi said he has received the majority of votes to form the new government while Prime Minister Berlusconi rejected defeat, demanding a

recount of votes.

- The EU and the US have voiced concern over President Ahmadinejad's announcement Tehran had managed to enrich uranium to use as nuclear plant fuel. The US said Iran could produce a nuclear bomb in 15 months.

- A survey by Reader's Digest shows 68 percent of the people in Europe opposed Turkey's EU entry, with the highest in Germany by 72 percent.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON